



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

260 Pandemic Business Continuity

Effective: December 1, 2009

Revised: March 9, 2020; October 16, 2020

Reviewed: October 26, 2020

References:

- DAS Policy 230 Leave Bank
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Purpose:

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Pandemic Business Continuity Policy is intended to anticipate the potential issues that may impact DAS, its divisions, employees, customers and the services that may be affected by a pandemic event. The nature of a pandemic event is that disruption to operations will mainly be human resources related, rather than infrastructure related.

Consequently, the DAS Pandemic Business Continuity Plan was developed with the following primary objectives:

- Protect the health and safety of DAS employees.
- Protect the health and safety of DAS customers.
- Maintain normal operations to the extent possible during a pandemic event.
- Ensure continuity of essential services and the delivery of essential products during a pandemic.

Policy:

I. Plan Assumptions

The DAS Pandemic Business Continuity Plan is based on the following planning assumptions:

1. Fifty percent or more of the DAS workforce may be working at place other than a state building during a pandemic event. This number includes sick employees, employees who are caring for sick family members, employees who have been exposed to a contagion, and employees who do not come to work for fear of becoming ill.
2. DAS will not close during a pandemic event unless ordered by the local or national health authorities.
3. Healthy employees are expected to report to work unless otherwise directed by management, and sick employees are expected to stay home until well.
4. DAS may not be able to provide all services at full capacity throughout a pandemic event.
5. Pandemic continuity planning requires the identification of mission essential functions or services and the employees who will be carrying out these functions.



II. Plan Components

The DAS Pandemic Business Continuity Policy covers the following areas:

1. Continuity of Essential Functions;
2. Human Resources Considerations;
3. Maintaining Staff for Essential Services;
4. Workplace and Employee Safety;
5. Crisis Communications;
6. Managing During a Pandemic; and
7. Monitoring, Reporting, and Confidentiality.

1. Continuity of Essential Functions

DAS hopes that the department will be able to maintain normal operations throughout a pandemic event. However, it is likely that service levels have to be altered during a pandemic. In the event that DAS cannot maintain normal operations during a pandemic, this policy calls for the divisions to:

1. Prioritize services as outlined in the division's service plan as essential or non-essential.
2. Create a plan to make essential services available during the duration of pandemic event that shall include:
 - a. Identification of employees and respective back-ups responsible for carrying out essential services;
 - b. Technology and information security requirements;
 - c. Changes to locations necessary to continue to provide services; and
 - d. Communication plan for customers, employees and other stakeholders.
3. Suspend non-essential services if necessary.
4. Provide the Executive Director's Office with a copy of the division's pandemic service plan.

2. Human Resources Considerations

The ability of DAS to maintain essential functions during a pandemic depends upon being able to have staff to perform essential services as well as preserve the health of its employees.

1. All workers currently participating in the telework program may telework full-time at management's direction. Employees who have a teleworking agreement should plan to work normal hours, including during a time of quarantine as long as they are asymptomatic. If a telework employee becomes ill or needs time off to care for an ill family member, they shall use sick or annual hours while they recover.
2. An employee who cannot telework but is required by management to stay away from their home base for any period of time will be given administrative leave equal to the amount of time they are required to stay away from the office.
3. All employees are required to inform their DHRM representative if they become symptomatic; even mild symptoms should be reported.
4. A non-teleworking employee who is required to stay away from the office and then becomes ill shall be given administrative leave up until the time the employee becomes symptomatic. Sick leave shall be used during recovery.
5. An Employees who does not have a current telework agreement in place may be asked to work from home temporarily in the case of a pandemic.



6. While the current DAS teleworking agreement states that employees should not be caring for young children or other dependents, DAS may choose to adjust the policy to allow, as a special exception, telework in those circumstances in the case of an emergency, such as the pandemic situation. Under such an exception policy, a teleworking employee would be expected to account for work and non-work hours during his or her work day and take appropriate leave (paid or unpaid) to account for time spent away from normal work-related duties.
7. An employee must always have a sufficient amount of work to perform throughout the workday when the employee teleworks. An employee performing telework during a pandemic who does not have enough work must notify the employee's supervisor and receive additional work or discuss leave options such as administrative leave.
8. If an employee who does not have available sick leave becomes ill, DAS may offer the employee leave bank hours subject to all terms currently in place for leave bank use.
9. Directors may consider allowing employees who are not sick but feel uncomfortable being in the workplace during a pandemic event to telework if enough work is available or authorize the employee to take the employee's available leave or leave without pay.
10. Any employee who has an asymptomatic family member who has been required to quarantine due to exposure should be given the opportunity to telework if possible. Otherwise, the employee shall use available leave. If no leave is available, the employee may use leave bank hours subject to all terms currently in place for leave bank use in accordance with DAS Policy 230 Leave Bank.
11. An employee may not report to work if the employee:
 - a. is symptomatic, no matter how mild;
 - b. has been directly exposed to someone who has been diagnosed with the virus; or
 - c. has traveled out of the state or to a hot-spot pandemic location and has not received authorization from the director to return.
12. All divisions shall report any infected or quarantined employee to the Executive Director's Office along with any arrangement made to accommodate the employee.
13. Depending on circumstances, an employee may also qualify for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and may choose to exercise the employee's rights under this ACT.
14. An employee may be required to provide medical documentation to DHRM. If an employee showing outward symptoms of the illness is asked to stay away from the workplace for a certain period of time and refuses, the Director shall consult with an appropriate HR representative.
15. An employee whose travel is an essential part of the job may be required to self-isolate and not return to the workplace for a period of time. During self-isolation, the employee will first attempt to telework if sufficient work is available. If sufficient work is not available to telework, the employee will be given administrative leave for the period the employee has been asked not to return to the workplace.
16. The Governor, State or local health department or the Executive Director may issue more specific guidance depending upon the pandemic. Any such guidance supersedes anything contradictory in this policy.



3. Maintaining Staff for Essential Services

To ensure adequate staffing of essential services during a pandemic event, DAS may:

1. Permit employees to telework, where feasible.
2. Utilize contract workforce if necessary.
3. Implement any of the following attendance strategies:
 - a. Rescind previously approved annual leave, compensatory time, leave of absences (other than for sick or family leave purposes) with minimal notice.
 - b. Change employee schedules, hours of work, or both with minimal notice.
 - c. Ask employees to telework with minimal notice.
 - d. Assign overtime with minimal notice.
 - e. Assign special duties with minimal notice.
 - f. Assign employees to alternate work locations with minimal notice.
 - g. Send employees who appear to be sick home.
4. Modify this policy to address any changes in pandemic environment or if local, state or federal governments mandate certain action.

4. Workplace and Employee Safety

To protect the health of its employees, DAS shall:

1. Educate employees on office and workstation cleaning:
 - a. Clean hard surfaces (desktops, phones, keyboards, light switches and handles) more thoroughly.
 - b. Surfaces frequently touched with hands should be cleaned often.
 - c. Remove magazines and newspapers from waiting rooms and common areas.
 - d. Enhance housekeeping services for general public use areas several times throughout the work period.
2. Educate employees on preventive measures to reduce spread of pandemic:
 - a. Utilize good hygiene by following recommended protection and infection control measures.
 - b. Minimize exposure by avoiding public gatherings, public places, and areas considered high risk.
 - c. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or shirt sleeve.
 - d. Wash hands often to avoid spreading and getting germs.
 - e. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
 - f. Refrain from handshaking or other physical contact.
 - g. Stay home and seek medical care when sick.
3. Encourage employees to be informed of, and aware of current pandemic control guidelines.

5. Crisis Communications

Each division director is responsible to disseminate vital information to employees, vendors, and suppliers. Frequent, correct, and relevant communication is a critical aspect of this policy .

DAS and its divisions will provide information and continuous updates through internal and external communications prior to, and during a pandemic. Communications will include, but not be limited to the following:



1. Notification to employees of operational changes;
2. Frequent updates about the pandemic status;
3. Advisories and alerts as conditions change;
4. Dedicated communications contacts for vendors and suppliers; and
5. Monitoring of local, state, and federal pandemic updates.

6. Managing During a Pandemic

Each division within DAS shall implement current leadership succession plans in the event a key position holder is unavailable during a pandemic. Establishing and maintaining current lines of succession should allow for orderly and predefined transition in leadership.

7. Monitoring, Reporting, and Confidentiality

1. Each division director will monitor the health status of the respective division's employees, and report on the capability to execute functions to the Executive Director's Office.
2. All employee reports to management regarding pandemic virus shall be treated confidentially, absent the express written authorization of the affected employee.